

ABSTRACT

A computer information database system manages computer profile data grouping the plurality of computers in groups that are nodes of a tree in accordance with user-specified grouping criteria that are respective values of computer profile data of interest, and manipulating the database data to produce summaries of attributes of the computers in a given group and in the groups in the subtree that has the given group as its root. The grouping criteria may be ranges of values for primary grouping criteria, particular values for primary and secondary grouping criteria, ranges of values for both primary and secondary grouping criteria, and so forth. The system uses a group mapping database table that includes profile value-to-match fields for the primary grouping criteria and, as appropriate, the secondary grouping criteria. To use ranges of values, the group mapping database table includes for each range an associated low limit profile value field and a high limit profile value field. If particular values are used as either or both of the primary and secondary criteria, the corresponding low and high limits may be set to the same values or respective value to match fields may be used instead of the high and low limit fields. If there are no secondary grouping criteria associated with a particular primary grouping range, the corresponding entries for the secondary low and high limit profile values or, as appropriate, the entry for the corresponding value to match field is/are set to NULL. Additional grouping criteria may also be used to further refine the selection of computers for the groups, with additional fields for associated values-to-match or ranges included in the group mapping database table. The values or ranges for any or all of the grouping criteria may be altered and/or the values or ranges for grouping criteria may be added to records in which the corresponding fields were set to NULL to change the way in which the computers are grouped.